I. INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

A. <u>PURPOSE OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN</u>

The Auburn/Bowman Community Plan is the official statement of Placer County setting forth goals, policies, assumptions, guidelines, standards, plan proposals, and implementation measures that will guide the physical and economic development of the Auburn and Bowman areas to at least the year 2010.

It expresses a clear vision of the future of the community and the directions in which it must grow if it is to grow in a healthy fashion. The Plan is intended to increase the degree of certainty regarding future growth so that public and private efforts can be focused on implementing the adopted Plan.

Many different goals, programs, and issues affect or are affected by future growth in the Auburn/Bowman area. This Plan, to a large degree, reconciles these sometimes disjointed and scattered goals, programs, and issues into a single policy document to guide future growth in this important area of Placer County.

B. <u>DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA</u>

The Auburn/Bowman Community Plan encompasses an area of approximately 40 square miles at the base of the Sierra Nevada foothills. Its central location between the San Francisco Bay area and the Lake Tahoe recreation areas, along with its rural setting and mild "above the fog and below the snow" climate are some of the basic features attracting people to the area.

The Auburn/Bowman area can be currently characterized as a rapidly developing foothill community with a central-urban downtown area and sprawling suburban development to the north and south, strip commercial development along the primary north-south road, Highway 49, and nodes of highway commercial activity to the east along Interstate 80. Within the City of Auburn, the Old Town and Downtown areas offer a clearly defined urban core. More recent development of the Highway 49 corridor, especially between Dry Creek Road on the north and New Airport Road on the south, Dewitt Center to the west, and the Auburn Airport to the east, has resulted in the establishment of an office, commercial, and service oriented urban area 2-3 miles north of the traditional center of the Auburn community. Within this area is now found the hospital, airport, industrial centers, larger commercial facilities, county government complex, schools, parks, and a large number of multi- and single-family housing projects. The fact that this area has developed with the type of urban development now found presents both challenges and opportunities for future planning. This Plan addresses such issues.

Although the Auburn/Bowman Community Plan does not include the City of Auburn, it has been prepared with the recognition that the City is also updating its General Plan for the area. The City of Auburn's sphere of influence currently covers much of the urbanized north area described above. In fact, the Auburn Airport is within the City limits, although separated from the rest of the City. Because this area is within the City's sphere of influence, because the area may one

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Figure 1

day be annexed to the City, and because the entire Plan area is identified as the Auburn area by both residents and visitors, this Plan acknowledges that it is important to maintain a single community identity. At the same time, it is clear that due to limited suitable land to accommodate new growth within the City, that substantial amounts of the growth, expected in this area over the next 20 years, is likely to occur in the unincorporated areas outside the City limits.

Although a great deal of the attention in this Plan is focused on the more intensely developed areas, the outlying agricultural and rural areas are important to the sense of community that typifies the Auburn/Bowman area. The study area extends out from Auburn and Bowman to include the Lone Star, Bear River, Christian Valley, Mt. Vernon, and Shirland Tract areas. (Portions of the Newcastle and Ophir area previously included within the study area, and a part of the 1978 Auburn Area General Plan are not included in this Plan. Those areas will be addressed in the future in a new Ophir-Newcastle Community Plan.) Auburn's attractiveness for residents and visitors is in large part attributable to its vitality and beauty of its natural setting and environment. The open spaces surrounding Auburn serve a crucial urban function as well. They separate the highly developed areas from the working landscape and from other urban areas. These open spaces and agricultural lands help make the community an identifiable, bounded place, places to which people feel they belong. Seen in this context the open spaces surrounding the community are as integral a part of the Auburn urban system as roads, buildings, and other basic facilities. They are a resource of irreplaceable value representing a major investment, which it is in the public interest to maintain.

The general study boundaries are depicted on the map on the following page. These boundaries are the American River to the east, the Bear River to the north, the Ophir General Plan area to the west, and the Newcastle/Shirland Tract area to the south.

The terrain is generally rolling foothills with some steep areas, especially along the American and Bear River Canyons. Elevations range from 680 to 2,100 feet above sea level, with the majority of the Plan area lying between 1,200 and 1.400 feet. Auburn Ravine, North Ravine, Orr Creek, Dry Creek, and Rock Creek are the major watercourses traversing the study area. A more complete description of the Plan area's resources is found in the Auburn/Bowman Community Plan Environmental Impact Report.

C. THE REGIONAL SETTING AND CONTEXT

The Auburn/Bowman area, although still a distinct community, has a place in a larger regional context. The regional setting is defined by the area's proximity to Nevada County and El Dorado County, connected by Highway 49, and to the larger cities of Roseville, Rocklin, and Sacramento, to the west connected by Interstate 80. Regional issues that affect Placer County and the Auburn/Bowman area include housing, jobs, transportation, air quality, water, commercial services, the economy, etc.

 Housing is a regional issue since a substantial percentage of employees in the Roseville and Sacramento areas commute to work from Auburn or through Auburn on Highway 49 or Interstate 80. The types and number of jobs in these areas have supported a healthy housing market in the Auburn area for many years.

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- Transportation is a regional issue since Interstate 80, Highway 49, and the Southern Pacific Railroad traverse the Plan area and contribute to traffic congestion while at the same time infusing money into the local economy.
- Air quality is a regional issue since regional traffic is responsible for much of the deterioration
 of the local air quality and because air pollution moves out of the more densely developed
 areas into Placer County and further east.
- · Water is a regional issue because so much of the region's domestic water supply is generated from the mountainous areas to the east and passes through the Auburn area to serve development to the west.
- Commercial services are a regional issue both because the Auburn area serves a much larger market area, and because of the lack of larger commercial outlets in the immediate area.
- The Auburn/Bowman area is affected by regional economic trends because of these connections to the greater Sacramento area and its economy.

Many of the problems which exist because of the regional setting of the Auburn/Bowman area are not going to be solved by any action taken within the Plan area; however, regional problems are also local problems and many opportunities exist within the Auburn/Bowman area to contribute to the solution of these problems. Affordable housing provided in the Auburn/Bowman area contributes to the supply for the region; efforts to reduce vehicle miles traveled in the Plan area will minimize the increase in air pollution in the region, etc.

Development activities in surrounding communities will affect the Auburn/Bowman area. Major development proposals in the Pilot Hill area of El Dorado County will affect traffic in the Auburn area as well as views of the American River Canyon. As Nevada County continues to grow, traffic on Highway 49 and Interstate 80 will increase and contribute to an existing congestion and air quality problem.

D. THE CURRENT PLANNING PROCESS

In 1988, it became evident that the 1978/79 Auburn Area General Plan was becoming outdated due to new provisions in state law which required more specific implementation measures than that Plan provided for, as well as physical changes to the area which necessitated more modern solutions to problems associated with development. The staffs of the City of Auburn and Placer County began a joint work program in 1989 with the goal of updating the 1978/79 Plan. The current planning effort represents the third cooperative endeavor between the City of Auburn and the County of Placer to collect information necessary to provide a comprehensive long range plan for the community and its surroundings; however, in this case, each jurisdiction has prepared a separate plan document based upon some collectively gathered data and additional data generated independently. The City of Auburn General Plan (1993) update is not a part of this document, nor has it been adopted or endorsed by the Placer County Board of Supervisors.

The City of Auburn's General Plan addresses land use and related issues within the current city limits as well as within the city's adopted Sphere of Influence.as established by the Local Formation

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Commission. Also addressed are land use and related issues within an "area of interest" which extends beyond the adopted Sphere of Influence. The Auburn/Bowman Community Plan, as the county's update effort is called, includes all of the unincorporated lands within the boundaries mentioned in the "Plan Area" section above, including the area which was within the boundaries of the 1979 Bowman General Plan. It was decided early on in the planning process to include the Bowman area in the current study due to its close proximity to the Auburn city limits and because concerns such as traffic, air quality, noise and community design are common to the entire region.

Public information forums were held in early 1990 as a cooperative effort by the staffs of both the city and the county. These forums provided residents of the Plan area and other interested parties an opportunity to receive information about the planning program and to express their ideas, concerns, preferences, desires and interests. In addition, several newsletters were circulated to an extensive mailing list and made available at a number of public locations. In addition to the input received by the city and county staffs at the public forums, numerous letters were submitted by individuals wishing to communicate their opinions and requesting consideration of specific land use designations on particular parcels of land. Throughout 1990 and 1991, information gathering and evaluation of public input continued. Using this accumulated data, county staff prepared three alternative land use proposals to be used by various consultants and the staff as the study progressed. The alternatives provided three different land use scenarios:

- 1. A Reduced Density alternative indicated a somewhat smaller residential holding capacity than the 1978/79 Plan.
- 2. A Consolidation alternative provided for a slightly larger residential holding capacity than the 1978/79 Plan; however, the densities were differently arranged so that land uses within the urbanized areas were intensified while the outlying areas were left in a very rural state.
- 3. An Increased Density alternative essentially allowed a substantial increase in residential densities by extending the urban expansion patterns of the previous two or three decades.

These three scenarios formed the basis for analysis and a guide for the preparation of the proposed Plan.

Citizens' Committee

In January of 1991, the Board of Supervisors appointed the Auburn/Bowman Community Plan Citizens' Advisory Committee to assist the staff in the preparation of the Plan. Meeting twice a month or more, the Committee reviewed much of the basic data that had been accumulated as well as the assumptions and goals developed by the staff. The Committee heard presentations by various consultants associated with the update effort, met on three occasions with the City of Auburn's General Plan Advisory Committee, analyzed the three alternative land use maps, and toured the Plan area. The Committee was selected to represent a broad spectrum of community interests, and they conducted several public workshops to gain public input on the Plan. The Committee made numerous recommendations during the preparation of the draft Plan. Due to this, the Plan reflects many of the Committee's comments.

Public hearings were conducted by the Planning Commission from September, 1992 to July of 1993, after which the Commission forwarded its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. The Board held two public hearings in February, 1994, and adopted the Auburn/Bowman Community Plan on June 21, 1994.

E. RELATIONSHIP TO THE CITY OF AUBURN'S GENERAL PLAN

As noted in the "Planning Process" section above, the Auburn/Bowman Community Plan is the third cooperative, comprehensive planning effort to be undertaken by the City of Auburn and Placer County. The 1964 Auburn General Plan was jointly prepared by the City and County and adopted by both the Auburn City Council and the Placer County Board of Supervisors. The same is true of the 1978/79 Auburn Area General Plan. While there was much cooperation between the City and County staffs and their consultants (some consultants were hired under joint contracts involving both the City and County; in other instances, the same consultant was hired separately by both the City and the County), the two jurisdictions will adopt separate plans.

The City of Auburn's General Plan serves as the official land use policy document within the incorporated City limits. It also serves as the City's guide to development and land use as it adds new area to the City by way of annexation. Although the Plan includes the City's adopted Sphere of Influence as established by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), as well as an "area of interest" which the City proposes to add to its Sphere of Influence in the future, land use policies and designations outside the current City limits have no force and effect until and unless the area in question is formally annexed to the City.

The Auburn/Bowman Community Plan is a component of the Placer County General Plan and serves as the official land use policy document within the unincorporated area described in the "Plan Area" section above. The Community Plan supersedes the 1978/79 Auburn Area General plan and the 1979 Bowman General Plan, and it has no force and effect within the incorporated limits of the City of Auburn (including the Auburn Airport which is an incorporated "island" not contiguous to the rest of the City).